

## Disclaimer



This is by no means a complete list of all the insignia, badges or medals found. This is a working copy and if you have anything to add which is not in this document, please email it to me at [info@vitae.co.za](mailto:info@vitae.co.za). If you are aware of any errors within, please contact me as well. This document will be updated from time to time and we would appreciate any info that you would like to add or correct.

## Navy

The South African Navy's earliest beginnings can be traced to the Port Elizabeth Naval Volunteer Brigade that was raised in 1861, but seems to have merged with a volunteer artillery unit in the following year. On 30 April 1885 a part-time unit named the Natal Naval Volunteers (NNV) was formed in Durban.

These men manned the six-inch guns that were to defend Durban from Russia, should she decide, as was feared, on a programme of expansionism. They served ashore in the South African War (1899 - 1902) and the Zulu Rebellion of 1906. The SA Navy has an unbroken link with the NNV, which later became the reserve unit SAS *Inkonkoni*. A similar unit, the Cape Naval Volunteers (CNV), later SAS *Unitie*, was formed in Cape Town in 1905, and on 1 July 1913 the two units formed the South African Division of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (RNVR).

During the First World War, South African Naval Volunteers served in the German South West African and German East African campaigns. South Africans served in the Royal Naval Air Service and contingents in British warships.

In 1921 a new RNVR base was established in Port Elizabeth (later SAS *Donkin*) and in the following year another base was commissioned in East London (later SAS *Port Rex*).

SAS *Inkonkoni*, SAS *Unitie*, SAS *Donkin* and SAS *Port Rex* were four of the seven Naval Reserve units of the SA Navy. The others were SAS *Rand* in Johannesburg, SAS *Magaliesberg* in Pretoria and SAS *Yselstein* in Simon's Town. The Naval Reserve is being integrated with the Fleet as part of the new SA Navy force structure. The last reserve unit to close, in 2005, will be SAS *Unitie*.

South Africa's first Permanent Force Navy, the SA Naval Service, was established on 1 April 1922. The first ships, a hydrographic survey vessel renamed HMSAS *Protea* and two minesweeping trawlers, renamed HMSAS *Sonneblom* and HMSAS *Immortelle*, were purchased by South Africa and they were to form the nucleus of the fledgling force.

Between 1933 and 1934, however, the Great Depression forced Government to return the ships and pay off all but two SANS officers and three ratings who were retained for survey work. The Royal Navy retained three officers, nine ratings and ten civilians to continue the training and supply of the RNVR (SA), which continued to operate.

In January 1940 South Africa established a new naval unit, the Seaward Defence Force, which was commanded by Rear Admiral G.W. Halifax, CMG. The Seaward Defence Force took over responsibility from the Royal Navy for operating the minesweepers, anti submarine services, and the other examination and signaling duties in South African waters.

During the Second World War, South Africa's "little ships" earned an enviable reputation in the Mediterranean. It was said that "the discipline, morale and above all, the marksmanship of the 22nd Anti-Submarine guys, were unequalled in the inshore squadron."

In South African waters our ships patrolled the entrances to our ports, escorted convoys between them, swept enemy mines and rescued more than 400 survivors from ships torpedoed by the many submarines operating in the area.

On 1 August 1942 the Seaward Defence Force and the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (South Africa) were amalgamated to form the South African Naval Forces (SANF) in which 10 332 officers and ratings served during the Second World War. At the peak period of the Second World War in 1944, the South African fleet consisted of 87 vessels. A total of 329 members of the SANF were killed in action or died in service and 225 awards for gallantry or distinguished service were bestowed on South African sailors.

The SA Woman's Auxiliary Naval Service was established in October 1943. About 280 "SWANS" served as harbour defence operators and in administrative posts.

A total of 2 937 officers and ratings were seconded to the Royal Navy, so that our sailors took part in nearly every major naval operation in the Second World War, as well as performing all manner of obscure duties from minesweeping off the Faroe Islands to hydrographical surveying in Chinese waters.

They served in the convoys to Russia, were present at the Normandy landings on D-Day and many of them served in the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm. During this time, South Africa's sailors showed that they were as good as the best in the world and established a proud fighting tradition.

At the end of the war, South Africa received three Loch Class frigates: HMSAS *Good Hope*, HMSAS *Natal* and HMSAS *Transvaal*. HMSAS *Natal* achieved a war record when she sank the German submarine U714 whilst still on trials off St Abb's Head on 14 March 1945.

On 1 May 1946 the SANF was reconstituted as part of the Union Defence Force with compliment of 60 officers and 806 men. Its fleet consisted of the three Loch Class frigates, two boom defence vessels (HMSAS *Barbrake* and HMSAS *Barcross*), one minelayer (HMSAS *Spindrift*) and 12 harbour defence motor launches. In 1947 the Algerine Class ocean minesweepers HMSAS *Bloemfontein* (ex HMS *Rosamund*) and HMSAS *Pietermaritzburg* (ex HMS *Pelorus*) arrived, both of which were commissioned in September that year.

In 1951 the SA Naval Forces became the SA Navy (SAN) and had grown to 132 officers and 1 499 men. Around this time, the V&W destroyers SAS *Jan van Riebeeck* (ex HMS *Wessex*), SAS *Simon van der Stel* (ex HMS *Whelp*) and the Type 15 frigate SAS *Vrystaat* (ex HMS *Wrangler*) were added to the fleet.

During the Second World War, 78 South Africans were also seconded to the Royal Marines. The SA Corps of Marines was formed in 1951 and was composed of coast and anti aircraft artillery regiments. When coastal artillery became obsolete in 1955, the Corps was disbanded.

In 1955 the Simon's Town Agreement was signed by Great Britain and South Africa. In terms of this agreement, the SA Navy expanded and the Simon's Town base and Naval Dockyard were handed over to South Africa on 1 April 1957. The SA Navy's main naval base moved from Durban to Simon's Town and Naval Headquarters moved to Simon's Town from Pretoria where it remained until 1976 when it moved back to Pretoria.

In terms of this agreement, the SA Navy was to also acquire three new Type 12 (modified Rothesay Class) anti submarine frigates, ten Ton Class minesweepers and five Ford Class seaward defence boats.

Other acquisitions included the tugs *De Noorde* (1961) and *De Neys* (1969) - the first tug in South Africa to be fitted with the then revolutionary Voith Schneider propulsion system - plus the torpedo recovery vessel, SAS *Fleur*, the first warship ever to be designed and built in South Africa (1969). The Navy's largest vessel, the replenishment vessel SAS *Tafelberg*, the former Danish merchant tanker *Annam*, was commissioned

after extensive refit in Durban in August 1967. She had the distinction of being the first ever ship designed in Denmark with the aid of a computer. In 1970, the arrival of the SAS *Maria van Riebeeck* heralded the birth of the submarine branch with three French-built Daphne Class submarines. The SAS *Emily Hobhouse* and SAS *Johanna van der Merwe* were to arrive shortly afterwards. Further orders for submarines and corvettes were cancelled as a result of the United Nations led arms embargo against South Africa in 1977. May 1972 saw the arrival of the purpose-built hydrographic survey vessel SAS *Protea* and, in 1981, the River Class mine countermeasures vessels joined the fleet.

The Marines were re-established as a branch of the SA Navy in 1979 to protect South Africa's harbours against attacks from land or sea. They were also deployed in South West Africa (Namibia), where they manned the twin-hulled harbour patrol boats and Vredenburg boats patrolling the Zambezi from Katima Mulilo. The Marines served in an infantry role on the Border until 1988 and were employed in counter-insurgency operations in South African townships in support of the South African Army. In September/October 1988 the Navy's largest and most successful peacetime exercise, Exercise Magersfontein, was held at Walvis Bay. The Navy demonstrated its ability to conduct operations far from its normal bases and revealed its amphibious capability by landing marines in Delta boats from SAS *Tafelberg*.

The Border conflict ended in April 1989 and was followed by comprehensive rationalisation programmes in all arms of the South African Defence Force. The Navy's tiny share of the defence budget had dropped even further, but with the need for new ships now critical. To retain a new ship procurement programme and effect the financial cutbacks, the Navy elected to disband the Marines, some of its shore establishments and retrench 23 percent (2 258) of its personnel.

The Strike Craft Flotilla (based at SAS *Scorpion* in Durban) was commissioned in 1980 with missile-carrying fast attack craft. Based in Durban, these small, fast and lethal ships, armed with surface-to-surface guided missiles, two 76 mm guns and smaller close-range weapons, formed the backbone of the Navy's surface strike power.

Sandock Austral was also to build what was the largest, most sophisticated vessel ever designed and built in South Africa, the replenishment vessel SAS *Drakensberg*. She was launched in August 1984 and arrived in Simon's Town in November 1987.

A subsequent major purchase was that of the Ukraine built *Juvent*, renamed SAS *Outeniqua* on commissioning in the SA Navy in 1993. The *Outeniqua* replaced the by then decommissioned SAS *Tafelberg*, but in turn decommissioned in 2004.

On Freedom Day, 27 April 1994, the SA Navy and the rest of the South African Defence Force (SADF) became part of the new SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and its personnel assisted with South Africa's first democratic election. The need to reduce defence expenditure and improve the effectiveness of the SANDF resulted in the transformation of South Africa's armed forces. In 1999 the much smaller Navy Office of the Ministry of Defence replaced the Naval Headquarters. The operational head, formerly Chief of Naval Operations, became Flag Officer Fleet and shifted his flag to Simon's Town. All the flotillas were disbanded and placed under his command. Their administration and logistic functions were entrusted to a general support base, Naval Base Simon's Town. All but one of the Strike Craft names were changed to honour famous South African warriors and the names of the submarines were changed to SAS *Spear* (previously SAS *Maria van Riebeeck*), *Umkhonto* (previously *Emily Hobhouse*) and *Assegaai* (previously *Johanna van der Merwe*).

Today the SA Navy recalls its origins with pride and confidently provides a professional and cost-effective maritime deterrent in times of war and a large variety of tasks in time of peace.













## Insignia (Trade Badges – a.k.a. Mustering)

				
Physical Trainer	Fire Fighter	Photographer	Sonar Torpedo Man	Diver
				
Radar Operator	Naval Intelligence	Mariner	Mine-Counter Measures	Quarter Armourer
				
Fire Quarter Armourer	ORDINANCE ARTIFICER	Internal Combustion ARTIFICER	Engine-Room ARTIFICER	Stoker
				
Naval Police	Radio ARTIFICER	Electrical ARTIFICER	Counter Intelligence	Telegraphist Sparker



				
Banter / Tactical Communications	Marksman	Survey Recorder	Electrical Warfare	Finances
				
Rigger	Chef	Hairdresser	Writer	Storekeeper
				
Steward	Bandsman	Shipwright Metalworker	Printer	Shipwright
				
Protection Force	Signwriter	Instrument Artificer		

# Qualification Badges






			
MINE WARFARE & CLEARANCE DIVING OFFICER BADGE	Navy Independent ships & Air Sea Rescue	NAVY MINE COUNTER MEASURES QUALIFYING BADGE	Submarine Qualifying Badge
			
Navy Strike Craft Badge	Senior Mechanician	Marine Engineering Officer	Bridge Watch Command Qualifying Badge
			
Marines Badge	Naval Cadet	SA Marine Corps	Dockyard Police












# Ribbons & Medals

## 1952–1975




South Africa introduced its own honours system in 1952. Its largest component was a series of military decorations and medals, which not only replaced the existing long service medals, but provided substitutes for the decorations which the British government had awarded in wartime:

Decoration Name	Post Nominals	Period current	Number awarded	Awarded for	Ribbon
Castle of Good Hope Decoration	CGH	1952–2003	Never awarded	Most conspicuous bravery	
Louw Wepener Decoration	LWD	1952–1975	7	Most conspicuous courage or greatest heroism	
Star of South Africa	SSA	1952–1975	20	Exceptionally meritorious service	
Van Riebeeck Decoration	DVR	1952–1975	2	Distinguished service in the field (officers)	
Honoris Crux (1952)	HC	1952–1975	5	Gallantry in action against the enemy	
Van Riebeeck Medal	VRM	1952–1975	5	Distinguished service in the field (other ranks)	
Louw Wepener Medal	LWM	1967–1975	8	Courageous or heroic deeds in saving lives	
Southern Cross Medal (1952)	SM	1952–75	587	Outstanding devotion to duty	
Pro Merito Medal (1967)	PMM	1967–75	374	Outstanding devotion to duty (other ranks)	
Danie Theron Medal		1970–2003		Diligent service in the Commandos	
Jack Hindon Medal		1970–1975	18	Diligent service in the Commandos (other ranks)	
<b>Campaign medals</b>					
Korea Medal		1953		Service in the Korean War	
<b>Commemorative Medals</b>					
Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal		1953		To commemorate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II	







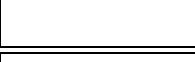



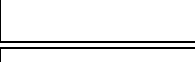



Long Service Medals					
Union Medal		1952–1961		18 years service in the Permanent Force	
Permanent Force Good Service Medal		1961–1975		18 years service in the Permanent Force	
John Chard Decoration	JCD	1952–2003		20 years service in the Citizen Force	
De Wet Decoration	DWD	1952–2003		20 years service in the Commandos	
John Chard Medal		1952–2003		12 years service in the Citizen Force	
Cadet Corps Medal		1966–1967		20 years service in school cadets	
Shooting Medals					
Queen's Medal for Champion Shots		1953–1961		Winning the annual SADF shooting championships	
Commandant General's Medal		1965–1975		Winning the annual SADF shooting championships	
Emblems					
Commendation by the Chief of the SADF		1968–1974			













### 1975–2003







A new system was introduced in 1975. It retained seven of the existing decorations and medals. Innovations included a hierarchy of merit awards, cumulative long service medals, and colour-coded ribbons. As the South African Defence Force was engaged in military operations in South West Africa and Angola throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the number of awards granted each year increased significantly. Additional decorations were instituted between 1987 and 1991.

Decoration Name	Post Nominals	Period current	Number awarded	Awarded for	Ribbon
Castle of Good Hope Decoration	CGH	1952–2003	Never awarded	Most conspicuous bravery	
Honoris Crux Diamond	HCD	1975–93	Never awarded	Death-defying heroic deeds of outstanding valour	
Honoris Crux Gold	HCG	1975–93	6	Outstanding bravery in extreme danger	



Star of South Africa, Gold	SSA	1975–2003		Meritorious military service.	
Star of South Africa, Silver	SSAS	1975–2003		Meritorious military service.	
Honoris Crux Silver	HCS	1975–2003	27	Exceptional bravery in great danger	
Honoris Crux (1975)	HC	1975–2003	201	Bravery while in danger	
Pro Virtute Decoration	PVD	1987–2003		Distinguished conduct and exceptional combat leadership (officers)	
Southern Cross Decoration	SD	1975–2003		Outstanding service of the highest order, and utmost devotion to duty (Officers)	
Pro Merito Decoration	PMD	1975–2003		Outstanding service of the highest order, and utmost devotion to duty (other ranks)	
Pro Virtute Medal	PVM	1987–2003	Never awarded	Distinguished conduct and exceptional combat leadership (other ranks)	
Ad Astra Decoration	AAD	1987–2003		Excellent flying skill or ingenuity by SA Air Force aircrew in emergencies or unusual situations <sup>[1]</sup>	
Army Cross	CM	1991–2003		Exceptional courage, leadership, skill or ingenuity in dangerous or critical situations (army personnel)	
Air Force Cross	CA	1991–2003		Exceptional courage, leadership, skill or ingenuity in dangerous or critical situations (air force personnel)	
Navy Cross	CN	1991–2003		Exceptional courage, leadership, skill or ingenuity in dangerous or critical situations (naval personnel)	
Medical Service Cross	CC	1991–2003		Exceptional courage, leadership, skill or ingenuity in dangerous or critical situations (military health service personnel)	
Southern Cross Medal (1975)	SM	1975–2003		Exceptionally meritorious service and particular devotion to duty (officers)	

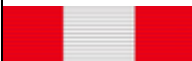



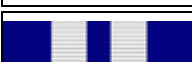


Pro Merito Medal (1975)	PMM	1975–2003		Exceptionally meritorious service and particular devotion to duty (other ranks)	
Danie Theron Medal	DTM	1970–2003		Exceptionally diligent and outstanding service in the Commandos	
Military Merit Medal	MMM	1974–2003		Service of a high order	
<b>Campaign medals</b>					
Pro Patria Medal		1974–1989		Operational service in combating terrorism or in defence of South Africa	
Southern Africa Medal		1989		Service in military operations outside South Africa and South West Africa between 1976 and 1989	
General Service Medal		1989		Operational service inside South Africa from 1983	
<b>Commemorative Medals</b>					
Unitas Medal		1994		To commemorate the amalgamation of the SADF, APLA, MK and the homeland defence forces to form the SA National Defence Force	
<b>Long Service Medals</b>					
Medal for Distinguished Conduct and Loyal Service		1987–2003		40 years service in the Defence Force	
Good Service Medal, Gold		1975–2003		30 years service in the Permanent Force	
Good Service Medal, Silver		1975–2003		20 years service in the Permanent Force	
John Chard Decoration	JCD	1952–2003		20 years service in the Citizen Force	
De Wet Decoration	DWD	1952–2003		20 years service in the Commandos	

John Chard Medal		1952–2003		12 (from 1986, 10) years service in the Citizen Force	
Good Service Medal, Bronze		1975–2003		10 years service in the Permanent Force	
De Wet Medal		1987–2003		10 years service in the Commandos	
<b>Shooting Medals</b>					
SADF Champion Shot Medal		1975–2003		Champion shots of the annual SADF Bisley in the categories of fullbore, smallbore, pistol and service shooting	
Cadet Corps Champion Shot Medal		1987–2003			
<b>Emblems</b>					
Mentioned in Dispatches		1967–2003			





### Armed opposition organisations

In 1996, two separate sets of decorations were instituted for veterans who had served in the Azanian People's Liberation Army and Umkhonto we Sizwe during the armed campaign against the former government.







### Azanian People's Liberation Army

Decoration Name	Post Nominals	Period current	Number awarded	Awarded for	Ribbon
Gold Star for Bravery	GSB	1996–2003		Exceptional bravery in great danger	
Bravery Star in Silver	BSS	1996–2003		Bravery	
Star for Conspicuous Leadership	SCL	1996–2003		Distinguished conduct and exceptional combat leadership	
Gold Decoration for Merit	GDM	1996–2003		Outstanding service and utmost devotion to duty	
Silver Medal for Merit	SMM	1996–2003		Exceptionally meritorious service and particular devotion to duty	
Bronze Medal for Merit	BMM	1996–2003		Service of a high order	
<b>Campaign medals</b>					
Operational Medal for Southern Africa		1996–2003		Operational service outside South Africa	





South Africa Service Medal		1996–2003		Operational service inside South Africa	
<b>Long Service medals</b>					
Gold Service Medal		1996–2003		30 years service in APLA	
Silver Service Medal		1996–2003		20 years service in APLA	
Bronze Service Medal		1996–2003		10 years service in APLA	




#### Umkhonto we Sizwe

Decoration Name	Post Nominals	Period current	Number awarded	Awarded for	Ribbon
Star for Bravery in Gold	SBG	1996–2003		Exceptional bravery in great danger	
Star for Bravery in Silver	SBS	1996–2003		Bravery	
Conspicuous Leadership Star	CLS	1996–2003		Distinguished conduct and exceptional combat leadership	
Decoration for Merit in Gold	GDMG	1996–2003		Outstanding service and utmost devotion to duty	
Merit Medal in Silver	MMS	1996–2003		Exceptionally meritorious service and particular devotion to duty	
Merit Medal in Bronze	MMB	1996–2003		Service of a high order	

#### Campaign medals

Operational Medal for Southern Africa		1996–2003		Operational service outside South Africa	
South Africa Service Medal		1996–2003		Operational service inside South Africa	




#### Long Service medals

Service Medal in Gold		1996–2003		30 years service in Umkhonto we Sizwe	
Service Medal in Silver		1996–2003		20 years service in Umkhonto we Sizwe	
Service Medal in Bronze		1996 – 2003		10 years service in Umkhonto we Sizwe	




## South African National Defence Force

The South African National Defence Force, which was formed in 1994 by amalgamating the SADF, the liberation armies, and the military forces of the former homelands, used the SADF decorations and medals until 2003, when a new series of decorations was instituted:

### Bravery

-  Nkwe ya Gauta (NG) (Golden Leopard)
-  Nkwe ya Selefera (NS) (Silver Leopard)
-  Nkwe ya Boronse (NB) (Bronze Leopard)

### Superior Service

-  iPhrothiya yeGolide (PG) (Golden Protea)
-  iPhrothiya yeSiliva (PS) (Silver Protea)
-  iPhrothiya yeBhronzi (PB) (Bronze Protea)





### Campaign medal

-  Tshumelo Ikatelaho (General Service Medal)

### Commemoration Medal

-  Closure Commemoration Medal









### Long service medal

-  Medalje vir Troue Diens (Medal for Loyal Service)
-  Medalje vir Troue Diens (Medal for Loyal Service with 20 Year Clasp)
-  Medalje vir Troue Diens (Medal for Loyal Service with 30 Year Clasp)
-  Medalje vir Troue Diens (Medal for Loyal Service with 40 Year Clasp)

### Emblems

















-  Okhankanyiweyo (Mentioned in Despatches)

## Ensign

				
1922–1946	1946–1951	1951–1952	1952–1959	1959–1981
				
1981–1994	27 April 1994 - 11 November 1994	1994–present		

# Rank

1994 – 2002

Officer Ranks					
					
Admiral	Vice admiral	Rear admiral	Rear admiral junior grade	Captain	Commander
					
Lieutenant commander	Lieutenant	LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE	Ensign		
Warrant officers and other ranks					
					
Warrant officer class 1	Warrant officer class 2	Chief petty officer	Petty Officer 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Seaman 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Seaman



## 2002 - Present

### Flag Officers



Admiral



Admiral  
slip-on rank



Admiral  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Vice Admiral



Vice Admiral  
slip-on rank



Vice Admiral  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Rear Admiral



Rear Admiral  
slip-on rank



Rear Admiral  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Rear Admiral (JG)

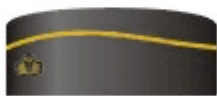


Rear Admiral (JG)  
slip-on rank



Rear Admiral (JG)  
on black  
jacket sleeves

Chaplains



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Chaplain



Chaplain  
slip-on rank



Chaplain  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Chaplain



Chaplain  
slip-on rank



Chaplain  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Chaplain



Chaplain  
slip-on rank



Chaplain  
on black  
jacket sleeves

## Senior Officers



Captain



Captain  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Commander



Commander  
slip-on rank



Commander  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Lieutenant-Commander



Lieutenant-Commander  
slip-on rank



Lieutenant-Commander  
on black  
jacket sleeves



## Junior Officers



Lieutenant



Lieutenant  
slip-on rank



Lieutenant  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Sub-Lieutenant



Sub-Lieutenant  
slip-on rank



Sub-Lieutenant  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Ensign



Ensign  
slip-on rank



Ensign  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Midshipman



Midshipman  
slip-on rank



Midshipman  
on black  
jacket sleeves

## Warrant Officers



Level 1 Warrant Officer



Level 2 Warrant Officer



Level 3 Warrant Officer



Level 4a Warrant Officer



Level 1 Warrant Officer  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Level 2 Warrant Officer  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Level 3 Warrant Officer  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Level 4a Warrant Officer  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Level 4 Warrant Officer



Warrant Officer Class 1



Warrant Officer Class 2



Level 4 Warrant Officer  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Warrant Officer Class 1  
on black  
jacket sleeves



Warrant Officer Class 2  
on black  
jacket sleeves

## Non-Commissioned Officers



Chief Petty Officer



On sleeve on white tunic and black jacket



Petty Officer



Leading Seaman



Able Seaman

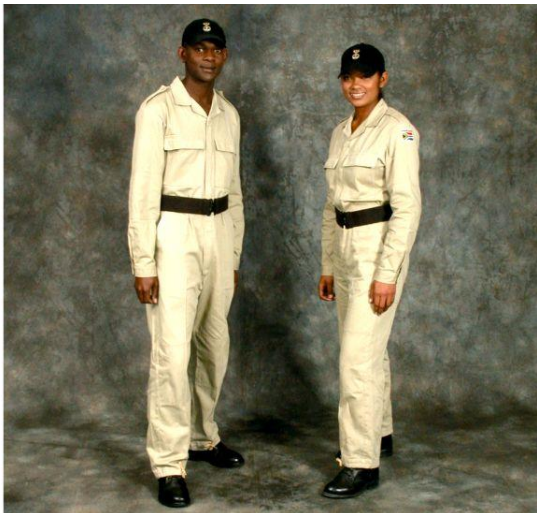


Seaman





# Uniform









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the Navy Museum – Simon's Town